

CHAPTER FOUR

LANGUAGE PLANNING IN THE SAUDI CONTEXT THROUGH INVESTIGATING STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS SA, CA AND ENGLISH

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1. Introduction

The present study aims at investigating Saudi university students' attitudes towards using two Arabic language varieties - Standard Arabic (SA) and Colloquial Arabic (CA) - besides English. The study is directed at gaining an insight into aspects of such perspectives. The sample of the study is extracted from 257 male undergraduate students at King Saud University. The coherent research design incorporates a questionnaire to examine the conscious attitudes of the participants. In order to examine the subconscious attitudes, a matched guise test is given, and a focus group protocol is used to analyse the aspects behind these approaches. Results show that students always use CA and rarely use SA or English, but that SA is more widely used in the media than in social interactions and in education.

In addition, most subjects believe they use English more than they use SA whereas CA is widely used in informal written discourse. Findings reveal that all students have a stronger progressive attitude towards using English language compared to the two Arabic language varieties. Although they overtly agree that SA is still considered superior to CA and English, the participants subconsciously believe that English is superior. The positive attitudes towards SA may indicate that students are influenced by religious, linguistic and cultural factors. The outcomes of the study throughout subconscious and conscious outlooks and attitudes of students may have significant inferences in Saudi Arabia for language planning in different dimensions (status, corpus, acquisition and prestige).

The study is structured into eight sections as follows: The theoretical parts, which include describing the linguistic situation, language varieties and education policy, and media language in Saudi Arabia, are covered in sections 1, 2 and 3. Section 4 provides the methodology used in the study. Data collection and data analysis are presented in sections 5 and 6, whereas section 7 is devoted to the findings revealed and their discussion. The chapter is concluded in the final section (section 8).

2. The linguistic situation in Saudi Arabia

The demographic situation in Saudi Arabia characterised by its high numbers of non-Arab foreigners has contributed to the creation of a unique socio-linguistic fabric. As a result, different language varieties are used among people, including Standard Arabic (henceforth SA), Colloquial Arabic (henceforth CA) and a pidgin language, along with English. The use of these varieties is based on the circumstances of communication. SA is mainly used in formal situations or to show respect. It is used in official government speeches, public lectures, religious discourse, academic discussion, formal meetings and in written form in general. CA, on the other hand, is the dominant form in informal situations. It is used to communicate with friends, relatives and with other Arabs in daily life. Pidgin is the lingua franca among the non-Arab labour force when they do not have a common language or if they talk to Arabs. English language has a significant place in social interaction. Hospitals and big private companies such as oil and petrochemical companies use English in the workplace. It is also used in places of high prestige such as hotels and luxury restaurants. All public signs and car plates usually use both Arabic and English. In their daily lives, residents may use all of these language varieties (SA, CA, pidgin and English). For instance, an individual may use SA to write an official letter, CA to speak with friends, pidgin to talk to foreign workers and English to order in a restaurant.

2.1 Language varieties and education policy in Saudi Arabia

Education policy in Saudi Arabia at both school and university levels aims to sustain the mother tongue, on the one hand, and to benefit from foreign languages, on the other. In Saudi Arabia, as well as in other Arab countries, linguistic conflict can be seen not only between the Arabic language and foreign languages such as English but also within the Arabic language itself. The Arabic diglossia has made Arabic speakers resemble bilinguals because they acquire and use two main varieties of Arabic, SA and CA (Ferguson 1959; Alchlih 2007). Therefore, many researchers have claimed that SA cannot be considered the first language (Ayari 1996; Eviatar and Ibrahim 2000). The discrepancy between these two varieties of Arabic has significant implications for education.

The Arab Human Development Report, which is presented by the United Nations Development Programme (2003), states that the difficulties arising from the diglossia between SA and CA besides the lack of a national language policy are considered to be significant aspects for the conflict within the Arabic language. In the same report it is claimed that SA is not usually used by the public for their daily communication needs or to express warm and spontaneous emotions and feelings. Thus, the situation is

considered one of the prime difficulties facing Arabic language education (United Nations Development Programme 2003).

This has been confirmed by several researchers who have attributed the complexity of teaching and learning Arabic literacy in the Arab world to the diglossic situation with SA and CA (Abu-Rabia 2000; Aldannan 1999; Ayari 1996; Maamouri 1998). Clear evidence of this is the fact that the language which the teachers use in their classes and the language in the textbooks are not the same. Teachers speak and explain their lessons using CA, whereas the textbooks are based on SA. This difference negatively affects the learning situation as well as the learners' impression of the textbooks and their attitudes to reading in general (Aldannan 1999). Therefore, there is an urgent need for deeper understanding of the diglossic situation within the educational context and its impact on learning, whether school-based or through informal structures (Dakwar 2005:77).

The challenges that Arabic language faces in the education setting require thoughtful action. Tinbak (2005) suggests several steps that might help preserve the position of the Arabic language in education. He insists on paying attention to the Arabic language at all educational levels, especially at primary school where the pupils' language acquisition ability is in its ideal period. He adds that the colloquial vernacular should be banned from use in all educational contexts, while reinforcing the use of SA. More effort should be made to improve the Arabic language curriculum to make it more interesting. There is a need to review the training of Arabic language teachers in educational colleges. At the same time, the Ministry of Education should choose distinguished teachers and improve the situation with the current teachers. Furthermore, a national awareness programme should be introduced to promote the significance of SA and its relationship with the Arab identity. Thus, simultaneous efforts from several directions (school environment, curricula, teacher training, society and media) are effective actions that can be taken to maintain the position of the Arabic language.

Since the establishment of the Ministry of Education in 1953, English has become a compulsory subject in intermediate and secondary schools. It is the only foreign language taught in public schools. However, in higher education, the learning of English depends on the university and the field of study. In some universities such as King Saud University, English is the medium of instruction for science subjects, besides teaching some compulsory English courses for all university students regardless of their field of study. Other universities such as Imam Islamic University consider English as an optional unit for students of human sciences. In February 2002, it was approved by the Ministry of Education that English should be taught in the

fourth, fifth and sixth grades of primary schools (Alammar 2009).

2.2 Media language policy in Saudi Arabia

The media policy in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia requires Saudi media to maintain SA-because it is the language of Islam- and its culture and heritage (Ministry of Culture and Information 1982). However, in practice, the media is not always in harmony with this policy. In recent years, the Saudi government has had less control over mass media than in the past due to the introduction of new media technologies (e.g. satellite and internet), which is reflected in language use in the media setting.

In the Arabic media, different varieties of Arabic language exist. According to Shousha (2003), it is not easy to categorise the language used in the Arabic media in any Arab context as just CA or SA. It goes beyond this simple classification. Applying Badawi's (1973) categorisation, Shousha (2003) notices five different varieties of contemporary Arabic in the media context: (1) the classical Arabic of Arabic heritage in religious programmes and historical dramas; (2) Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) in news bulletins, political programmes, cultural programmes and in the majority of the written media; (3) CA of the cultured participants in serious talk shows, programmes of opinion, and debates; (4) CA of those with a basic education in light dialogues that discuss social issues, art and sports, and is also commonly used in live broadcasts; and (5) CA of illiterates which is used mainly in dramas with some characters representing illiterate people.

Alshamrani (2012) proposes another classification of the different varieties of Arabic used in media settings. He distinguishes between three different forms of Arabic used in today's media: Literary Arabic (H), middle language (ML) and local vernacular (L). The H variety refers to the language used in Arabic literature, the L variety refers to the local colloquial language of a particular Arabic place and the ML variety is in the mediatory level between Literary Arabic and the local vernacular. This categorisation seems more practical than that of Shousha's (2003) classification.

Alshamrani (2012) also notices that while some TV channels commonly use the H level, other TV stations generally use the L variety. This difference in language level occurs according to the nature of the programme on the channel. The H variety of Arabic is common on news and documentary TV stations; however, music, entertainment and series channels regularly use the L variety. Whereas, the ML variety can be found on most channels, depending on the nature of the programme presented.

In the light of the earlier studies and the purpose of this study, we attempt

at arriving at reasonable answers to the following two questions:(i)What are the attitudes of the students at King Saud University towards the frequent use of SA, CA and English varieties? and(ii) What are the factors behind these attitudes from the students'perspectives?

3. Methodology

3.1 Research design

An integrated approach is used in this study to investigate the attitudes towards the use of two varieties of Arabic (CA and SA) besides English in the Saudi context. A combination of direct and indirect investigation of attitudes with both quantitative and qualitative research approaches was adopted. Instruments included a questionnaire, a matched guise test(MGT) and a focus group protocol as shown in Figure 4.1.

As noted above, the research data were gained from both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data were obtained from a questionnaire used directly to investigate the students'attitudes towards the two varieties of Arabic besides English. The second instrument used to obtain quantitative data was the matched guise test (MGT). It was used to indirectly provide data about attitudes to the two varieties of Arabic and English. To obtain the qualitative data, the study used a semi-structured focus group protocol. The qualitative data were used to gain a deeper understanding of the factors behind students'attitudes. According to Thøgersen (2010:297):

There are several reasons for complementing quantitative measures with qualitative ones, not least the wish to gain insights into respondents'own thinking about issues the researchers found it relevant to ask about-that is, to understand not just which attitudes they hold, but maybe also why they hold them and what other issues might exist.

The combination of quantitative and qualitative measures means that a phenomenon can be investigated from different perspectives and as a result reciprocal supplemental data, substantial findings, better validated results and subsequent conclusions are delivered(Creswell 2003).

3.2 Research participants

The participants in this study were drawn from an unplanned sample of undergraduate Saudi students from King Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Two hundred and fifty seven students from three different faculties (61 students from Human Sciences,96 from Medicine and 100 from Sciences) participated in the MGT. The total number of participants in the questionnaire was 260 students from the same three faculties (96 students

from Human Sciences, 93 from Medicine and 71 from Sciences). First, the majority of the participants completed the MGT, then the questionnaire. However, for one reason or another, a few completed only one instrument. Seventeen students from the three main faculties (5 students from Human Sciences, 5 from Medicine and 7 from Sciences) participated in the focus group protocol.

3.3 Research instruments

As mentioned previously, to examine the attitudes of the participants and to understand the factors behind such attitudes, the current research made use of three instruments: the questionnaire, the MGT and the focus group protocol. These three instruments are explained under the next subheadings.

3.3.1 The matched guise test (MGT)

The results of this socio-linguistic test helped to investigate indirectly the participants' attitudes towards using SA, CA and English. In the MGT, the participants listened to three people speaking the three language varieties. So, they listened to nine different versions in total. After that, they were asked to judge the speakers for personal characteristics, without knowing that each set of the three voices in fact belonged to one person. The participants were not informed that their attitudes were indirectly under investigation. Therefore, any differences in the evaluation could be attributed to the language that the speaker was using. Most of the participants were expected to have intermediate-level English proficiency and have studied English for at least six years at school and one intensive year during the university preparation year.

3.3.2 The questionnaire

To investigate the participants' attitudes directly, a questionnaire was used. The questionnaire helped the researchers to obtain information about the participants' attitudes towards the two main varieties of Arabic (SA and CA) and English. There were three main sections in the questionnaire. The first section focused on the students' actual use of the varieties based on their self-evaluation. This section was divided into three general categories: social interaction, education and media. Each category had several items. The participants could identify their use of SA, CA and English for each item by choosing one of four levels of use, which were 'always', 'sometimes', 'rarely' and 'never'. The second section of the questionnaire included several statements arranged on the Likert scale in order to measure

the participants' attitudes directly. The items were also divided into three major groups that represented the use of the language, namely social interaction, education and media. The last section of the questionnaire aimed to collect information about the participants, namely: age, university field of study, college, English proficiency and previous English courses undertaken.

3.3.3 The focus group protocol

To obtain the qualitative data, a semi-structured focus group protocol was used in order to investigate the factors behind the participants' attitudes towards using the two varieties of Arabic and English. Using this technique helped the researchers to obtain the required data from observation of the interaction among the participants (Harrell and Bradley 2009).

3.4 Data collection

Since the study was based on a random cluster sample from three faculties at King Saud University (Human Sciences, Sciences and Medicine), the researcher arranged about 15 sessions over the three months of the second semester of 2011 to collect the data. Interested students were informed that participation would consist of two parts: the first part would be a test to examine their reactions to people's voices and the second part would be a questionnaire about the same issue. After they were given instructions, some of the participants volunteered to do the MGT but most of them only completed the questionnaire.

When investigating the participants' attitudes, the researchers ensured that the participants thoroughly understood the questionnaire items about attitudes. This was achieved through the wording of the items and by consultation about and testing of the questionnaire. The researchers also tried to encourage participants to ask about any unclear statement before the questionnaire was administered in each session. The subjects were required to retrieve information from their minds to indicate their attitude judgement. Therefore, they were asked to read each item carefully and think about it before deciding their position. They were given enough time to do so. Some of the participants preferred to take the questionnaire away and return it after a few days, whereas others preferred to do it immediately at the arranged session.

The focus group protocol was administrated after conducting the MGT and the questionnaire. The MGT and the questionnaire forms included a question for participants about whether they were able to participate in the research interview. The participants were selected randomly to represent the

three main faculties(Human Sciences,Medicine and Sciences).Five sessions were arranged with three to four participants in each. The sessions lasted between 75 and 90 minutes.

3.5 Data analysis procedures

3.5.1 Quantitative data analysis

For the quantitative analysis, the research applied the SPSS programme. As mentioned earlier, two instruments were administered to collect the quantitative data,namely the MGT and the questionnaire. For both instruments, the participants' demographic profiles were processed in the same way. Frequency and percentage were used to analyse participants' ages, academic specialisations and their previous English courses undertaken. The mean and standard deviation were calculated to determine the participants'self-evaluation of their English proficiency.

Concerning the MGT analysis,frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and ranking for each item were calculated for the speakers of each language variety. The mean and standard deviation based on the evaluation aspects(social attractiveness, competence and personal integrity)were calculated individually and for each language variety. Additionally,the research applied one-way analysis of variance (F-test) to find out whether the MGT evaluation was significant between the three language guises for each trait.

Regarding the items about attitudes on the questionnaire, the mean of each questionnaire category was calculated, taking into consideration the use of both negative and positive items. Thus, the scales of the negative items were reversed when scoring the total mean of each section of the research questionnaire. Failure to take this significant step produces a hidden error that some researchers do not recognise although it has an effect on the research outcomes(Sauro and Lewis 2011).

In the questionnaire analysis, the items were divided into the three language varieties(SA, CA and English). Each variety had three subsections, namely social interaction, education and media. The comparative items were also divided into the three language varieties. The one-way analysis of variance(F-test)was used to determine whether the direct and indirect methods revealed any significant differences in the participants' attitudes towards using SA, CA and English based on their university field of study. When a significant difference was determined, a multiple range test (the Scheffe test) was applied to define where the difference occurred.

3.5.2 Qualitative data analysis

To gather qualitative data, the research used the focus group protocol. All the focus group sessions were first transcribed into Arabic. Then, the transcript was coded, categorised and organised. The ATLAS programme was utilised to assist the researchers in processing the qualitative data. A coding system based on previous research as well as generating codes based on the data analysis was used. To enhance the intra-code reliability of the coding scheme, 10% of the transcript was selected randomly and then coded. After a week, the same transcript was coded and the correlation between the first and second coding was calculated. The coding correlation was 98%. Another person was also asked to code the same transcript after being trained to code the list. The correlation between the coding of the researchers and the second coder was 95%. This indicates acceptable intracode reliability of the coding system since the consistency among the different coders was satisfactory.

4. Findings and discussion

This part of the study explains and discusses findings from the research relating to the participants' attitudes towards using the three language varieties of SA, CA and English.

4.1 Participants' use of SA, CA and English

Findings indicated that the mean score for participants' attitudes towards CA was $M=3.16$, while the mean scores for SA and English were $M=2.17$ and $M=2.39$ respectively. The high use of CA in comparison to SA and English resulted from its position as a mother tongue of the participants. Normally, Arabs acquire CA before learning SA during formal education (Dakwar 2005; Maamouri 1998; Owens 2006; Saidat 2010). An unexpected finding in this study was that when the participants stated they used English more than SA. This could be justified by many reasons. Firstly, the occurrence of rapid economic growth in Saudi Arabia over the last few decades has increased the need for manpower (Al-Haq and Samadi 1996). In Saudi Arabia, about one-third of the population are foreigners and the majority of them are non-Arabic speakers. Secondly, the participants in this study represented a sample of university students, two-thirds of them were studying sciences or medicine where the content of instruction was essentially in English. This might have influenced their language behaviour outside the educational context as well. Thirdly, all participants considered themselves to have an intermediate level of English proficiency, which enhanced their use of the language. Figure 4.2 provides a comparison between the uses of the several language varieties investigated in various circumstances.

Figure 4.2 shows an inverse relationship between the uses of the two varieties of Arabic: the higher use of CA results in a lower use of SA and vice versa. SA and CA are two varieties of the same language representing two different levels of it, which are used extensively; hence, more use of one variety results in less use of the other, which is common in all diglossic situations.

The overall findings indicated that SA was rarely used in social interactions or in an educational setting. However, the discussion with the focus groups suggested that use was based more on the context of the communication. Ennaji (1991) states that when the conversation is about serious and respected themes or it is with a highly educated person, the H variety of Arabic will be used. The high use of CA among the participants in social interactions might be due to its position as their mother tongue. The interviews also revealed two reasons that explained why CA was used extensively in the written form: because of its simplicity and to avoid making mistakes when using SA. Interviewees maintained that they feel more competent using CA than SA.

Additionally, the participants indicated that they used English more than SA but less than CA. They declared that they used English in reading and writing more than in speaking. Also, they used English more than SA and CA when talking with non-Arab workers in hotels and restaurants, but when talking to non-Arab workers while shopping, English and CA were used equally.

Notably, the use of English when talking to non-Arabic speakers was based on the prestige of the place where the interaction took place. The more prestigious it was, the more English was used. Participants' answers showed that their perceptions did not link English only with the level of prestige but also with the quality of the service. The link between English use and prestige has been widely addressed in the literature associated with this field. In several contexts, many researchers (Li 1999; Ager 2005; McKenzie 2008; Blommaert 2010; Abu-Ghazaleh and Hجازي 2011; Malallah 2000) have also concurred on this link.

4.2 Attitudes revealed by using a direct method of investigation

4.2.1 Attitudes towards the use of SA

The conscious methods of investigation used in the current research revealed that the participants' attitudes towards using SA were positive ($M=3.22$). As will be indicated later by the qualitative data, these attitudes were influenced by religious, linguistic, social and cultural factors. Studies

by Saad(1992) in Algeria,Saidat (2010)in Jordan and Ennaji(1991) in Morocco arrived at the same conclusion. However,the subconscious investigation of attitudes, which will be addressed later, did not support this conclusion.

Direct evaluation of attitudes supported the belief of students concerning the superiority of SA over CA and English.SA was commonly perceived as the mark of an educated person. This is can be explained due to the position of SA as an H-variety language in the speech used among educated people. However, many participants agreed that people had a negative feeling towards them when they used SA in usual communication. This negative feeling was also noted by Saidat (2003),who suggests that there is a widespread certainty that people who use SA in their communication will probably be subject to derision. Also, this negative feeling might be related to a linguistic factor represented in the participants' incompetence in SA. In addition, it seems that the participants thought that SA was not used in regular communication, but in specific contexts. Thus, in the interview, the context in which a language is used was identified as one of the social factors behind the participants' attitudes.

Concerning the students'attitudes towards the use of SA in the educational settings, in consistent with other studies (e.g. Al-Haq and Samadi 1996; Al-Jarallah and Al-Ansari 1998), findings showed that the students consciously chose to use SA as the preferred medium of instruction for scientific subjects. In contrast with their unconscious statement about preferring English as a medium of instruction in all scientific subjects. These findings present a conflict between the cognitive and affective components of attitudes.

This could be explained by the fact that the interviewees distinguished between situations where they would prefer to continue using English as the medium of instruction. It seems they realised the problems of a lack of Arabic resources and translating concepts into Arabic. For several reasons, the majority of participants concurred that science knowledge should be Arabized. One factor is that the participants believed that scientific subjects were easier to be understood when taught in SA. Another factor is that motivating the Arabization of science knowledge was the desire to preserve culture and identity.

On the other hand, two points revealed the negative attitudes of students towards using SA in education. The first point was that although the participants expressed consciously their support for Arabicizing science, they apparently felt that SA was the language of religion and literature more than that of science and technology. The second point was related to the

nature of teaching and learning SA. Most of the respondents granted that learning SA was not enjoyable.

Regarding the media, students' attitudes towards using SA could be generally seen as positive. The participants acknowledged that they preferred to see SA rather than CA used in the press because it was "a beautiful form of language". The beauty of the language was specified as one of the linguistic factors that enhanced positive attitudes towards using SA. Although the participants believed in the beauty of SA, their actual use of it on social media was less than CA and English. On the one hand, this showed that the participants' knowledge and their actions were not always in harmony; the three components of attitude - action, knowledge and emotion - might not co-exist in agreement (Baker 1992; Matsuda 2000). On the other hand, SA is considered to be an H-variety language and there are specific situations in which it is used, so it is not appropriate to be employed in every situation. Prestige is always associated with using SA. The respondents were unanimous that prominent TV channels used only SA. Although the participants' attitudes towards radio stations that used SA were positive, they were not in favour of watching films that used SA. Often, SA is used exclusively in historical films, whereas most drama and comedy movies use the local vernacular (Alshamrani 2012).

4.2.2 Attitudes towards the use of CA

The direct methods of investigation used in the current research revealed that the participants' attitudes towards using CA tended to be positive ($M=3.12$). Several linguistic, social and cultural factors led to these results. Regarding social interaction, the findings showed that the participants concurred that it was easier for them to express feelings using CA than SA. A close relationship between CA and identity was shown because most participants considered that CA represented their local identity. The relationship between CA and local identity was investigated in many other Arabic contexts such as in Morocco (Marley 2004) and Iraq (Murad 2007). The respondents were conscious of the value assigned to SA as giving an Arab identity rather than a local one. Hence, they acknowledged that the use of CA threatened Arab unity, and they thought that the use of CA was clearly restricting the spread of SA.

Attitudes towards CA in education equally ranged between positive and negative. About half of the participants acknowledged that if a teacher used CA in class, it would make it easier to understand the subject. On the other hand, the rest of the respondents believed that using CA in the classroom was not appropriate. It was assumed to be an L-variety language that had limitations for becoming the language of knowledge. Therefore, many

participants supported banning it from use in educational contexts. Demanding the banning of CA from use in education on the grounds that it affects education in general and the education of the Arabic language in particular has been supported by many researchers (Abu-Rabia 2000; Aldannan 1999; Ayari 1996; Maamouri 1998; Tinbak 2005).

In general, there seem to be two views about using CA in education. The first view focuses more on the advantages of using CA in educational settings because of its linguistic simplicity, whereas the other view is more concerned about the disadvantages of its cultural impact. However, the participants apparently preferred CA as the medium of instruction because it made learning easier, yet at the same time, they realised the importance of upholding the position of SA as perhaps the most prominent marker of identity.

As for the media, students' attitudes towards using CA were positive. Findings showed that most of the participants preferred watching TV programmes that used CA. Moreover, they were unified in the view that radio programmes using CA were more comprehensible than those that used SA. The participants suggested that this was possibly linked to the simplicity of CA. However, most of the participants stated that it was not acceptable to use CA in written media. These findings together also present a conflict between the cognitive and affective components of attitudes. The respondents were more likely to support the position of SA because of their knowledge and perhaps due to its position as an H-variety language that is prestigious and considered to be superior, more logical and respected within the speech community. Similar to Ferguson's (1959) diglossia, however, emotionally they tended to favour CA, because it was their mother tongue and people might have a stronger attachment to their own dialect than to others (Cook and Bassetti 2010).

4.2.3 Attitudes towards the use of English

Findings revealed that attitudes towards the use of English were generally positive ($M=3.53$). Several linguistic, social, instrumental and educational factors contributed to these positive attitudes. In consistency with many other studies (Almaiman 2005; Young 2006; Tachibana, Matsukawa and Zhong 1996; Karahan 2007), participants shared a strong desire to speak English well. Almost two-thirds of the participants believed that if they could speak English well, their family would be proud of them. This social value of English seems to be a unanimous finding in investigations of attitudes towards English (Abu-Ghazaleh and Hijazi 2011; Crismore, Ngeow and Soo 1996; Esseili 2011; Karahan 2007; Malallah 2000; Matsuda 2000; Pierson, Fu and Lee 1980; Pishghadam and Sabouri

2011). Another social factor which motivated students' positive attitudes towards using English was the social contact with non-Arabic speakers. The majority of the participants admitted that they used English when talking to non-Arabic speakers.

As for instrumental factors, the participants felt that the use of English was a contributory factor to their success and essential to their attainment. In agreement with Al-Haq and Samadi's(1996) study, most of the research participants realised that English language was essential for using technology. Besides, about half of the participants seemed to think that English language use in everyday life was a sign of social advancement.

However, the students of human sciences seemed to be more conservative in their responses. This conservative view was compatible with the view of persons committed to religion (Al-Haq and Samadi 1996).

The views of students of medicine and of sciences might be influenced by the status of English in their fields of study. In conformity with other contexts such as in Japan(Chiba, Matsuura and Yamamoto 1995) and Korea (Lee 2009), the participants appreciated the position of English as an international lingua franca.

In addition to their favourable attitudes towards the use of English, the participants were conscious of the cultural value involved in using English. The majority of participants conceded that using English in various domains of public life was a sign of the influence of western culture in Saudi Arabia. Moreover, more than half of the participants granted that the extension of English education into elementary school would increase the western influence. This was also expressed in the interviews as one of the cultural factors behind negative attitudes towards English. The awareness of the cultural influence of English may not be in conflict with their thoughts about the relationship between using English and employing technology and national development. However, they were concerned about the increasing use of English.

In general, the use of English language in the educational system in Saudi Arabia is a controversial issue. The participants broadly supported English use in education. The majority of them acknowledged that the frequent usage of English as a language of instruction opened the doors to careers for students, especially with the rapid development that the country is witnessing. Most of the leading private companies in Saudi Arabia use the English language as a medium of communication (Elyas 2008). The interviews with the participants also showed that occupational opportunity was an instrumental value that motivated progressive attitudes towards

English language use. Therefore, most of the participants opined that classes at universities should be conducted exclusively in English.

Regarding using English language in the media, students' attitudes were generally positive. Most of the participants liked to watch films in English. Several factors might contribute to this preference for English films, e.g. the affluence of the English-speaking film industry. Findings also showed a substantial difference in the attitudes of the participants towards using English language based on their university field of study. Students of medicine had a considerably more progressive attitudes towards using English language than the students of sciences and human sciences. This might be due to the fact that English language is used as the language of instruction at the Faculty of Medicine. These results are similar to the results of the studies conducted by Sayadian and Lashkarian (2010), and AbuGhazaleh and Hijazi (2011), which concluded that the university field of study had an impact on the conscious attitudes of the participants. Similarly, Malallah (2000) found significant differences between the attitudes towards English in the Kuwait context based on the students' field of study.

4.3 Attitudes revealed by using an indirect method of investigation

For a wider picture of the subconscious evaluation of the participants' attitudes, Figure 4.3 compares the three language varieties for all the MGT items.

Figure 4.3 shows how the participants evaluated the speakers of the three language varieties in the MGT. Interestingly, the differences are significant for all the traits evaluated. The inclusive view indicated that the English speakers were rated higher than the SA and CA speakers in most areas. The SA speakers appeared to be in the middle between the English and the CA speakers for most traits, whereas the CA speakers received the lowest gradation.

4.3.1 Attitudes towards the use of SA

Findings from the MGT revealed that the participants' overall evaluation of the SA speakers was positive ($M=3.19$). Viewed in detail, the evaluation was positive for 'personal integrity' ($M=3.34$) and 'competence' ($M=3.22$) but negative for 'social attractiveness' ($M=2.58$). This evaluation might reflect the participants' view of SA as an H-variety language that had high esteem, with its use related to more serious official matters. In general, these outcomes from the MGT were supported by the results of both of the conscious methods of investigation: the questionnaire and the interviews. From the interviews, the situational context was identified as one of the

social factors behind the attitudes towards using SA. The interviewees reported that SA was the language used by educated people when discussing serious issues.

Overall, attitudes towards using SA revealed by indirect investigation ($M=3.19$) corresponded with those revealed by the questionnaires ($M=3.22$). SA was evaluated positively in three components of the direct study of attitudes, although results were more positive for knowledge and action than for emotion. Additionally, when using the indirect method of investigation, SA was judged positively for both 'competence' and 'personal integrity', whereas the 'social attractiveness' was evaluated negatively.

4.3.2 Attitudes towards the use of CA

The overall evaluation of the CA speakers was marginally positive ($M=3.11$). This might be resulted from the fact that most of the Arab individuals perceive CA as an L variety of the Arabic language (Altwaijri 2004; Tinbak 2005). The L variety enjoys only a low prestige and is not considered to be superior and logical (Ferguson 1959). Nevertheless, this result might be explained by the fact that the variety of CA used in the MGT was what can be defined as 'educated colloquial'. The level of such CA is intermediary between local colloquial and MSA. It is close to SA and is used among educated people. In general, the CA guises were assessed negatively for 'competence', whereas for 'social attractiveness' and 'personal integrity' they were evaluated positively. This is probably resulted from the influence of the lower value linked to CA.

The overall outcome of the conscious method of investigation of attitudes towards using CA was $M=3.12$, which was almost identical to the results of the subconscious methods of investigation used in this study ($M=3.11$). However, on the basis of the three components of the conscious methods, the participants expressed negative attitudes through their knowledge, while there were positive outcomes for the actions and emotions components. As for the results from the subconscious method of investigation, the attitudes of the participants were positive for 'social attractiveness' and 'personal integrity' but were negative for 'competence'. These differences in attitudes based on the level of consciousness contribute to our understanding of how the participants perceived CA.

4.3.3 Attitudes towards the use of English

Unconscious attitudes towards using English were distinctly positive. The findings of covert attitudes towards using English ($M=3.51$) in a broad

sense corroborated the findings of overt attitudes ($M=3.53$). The English guises were assessed positively with regard to 'competence' and 'personal integrity', as well as the components of direct attitudes investigation - 'knowledge', 'action' and 'emotion' - while being assessed negatively for 'social attractiveness', principally for having 'a sense of humour'. From these overt and covert attitudes about how English was perceived by the participants, it is evident that both methods of investigation revealed favourable attitudes towards using English. These results can probably be attributed to the marked attention given to the English language in the Saudi context at different levels (AlJarf 2004, 2008; Alkhabti 2002; Elyas 2008). The position of English as a superior language (AlJarf 2008) and the language of the elite global community (Blommaert 2010) means that it is used among 'high level people' who are distinguished by their personal qualities.

Regarding the differences in the participants' assessments of the English guise based on their university field of study, a significant difference was brought to the fore. The students of sciences had significantly more progressive attitudes towards using English language than the students of medicine and human sciences in the MGT. However, in the questionnaire, the attitudes of the students of medicine were significantly more positive.

A question that remains unanswered is why the direct method of investigation revealed that the students of medicine had more positive attitudes towards English, whereas the indirect methods of investigation revealed that students of the sciences had more positive attitudes. A possible answer to this query might be that the students of medicine were more involved with English language through their textbooks, the teaching they experienced and their practice, which might have influenced their answers in the part of the study that investigated attitudes using direct methods of investigation. On the other hand, science students were less involved in using English than medicine students and they used English only in textbooks. Their teaching and their actual practice was a combination of Arabic and English, as the participants indicated in the interviews. Therefore, indirect investigation of attitudes revealed that English was becoming more attractive to the students of science. From the direct and indirect methods of studying attitudes, it appears that attitudes may be related to language need, use and cultural factors.

4.4 Factors behind students' attitudes from their perspectives

The main aim of the researchers from this qualitative part was to find out a deeper understanding of the participants' attitudes and the factors that constructed and guided such attitudes, taking into consideration the concept

of attitude with its three components of knowledge, emotion and action. To answer the question, focus group discussions were used. The data were recorded, transcribed, coded, categorised and organised. Coding was done based on the analysis of the interview transcripts as well as with reference to previous literature including Al-Haq and Samadi(1996),AlJarf(2008), Dakwar(2005),Lo (2009) and Saidat (2010). The analysis of the focus group discussions revealed six main factors behind the participants' attitudes, namely:religious,linguistic, social, cultural, instrumental and educational factors. These main factors involved several sub-factors, with some overlap. Figure 4.4 presents a conceptual schema of the factors that were revealed.

As shown in Figure 4.4, students' attitudes were influenced by several factors distinguished by language varieties. Findings indicated that the attitudes towards each variety were guided by specific factors that were different from the other varieties.

5.Conclusion

The results of this study have assisted the researchers in identifying a section of the linguistic situation in the Saudi context. Regarding language use,the study showed that the participants always used CA, with extended use in social interactions. The use of SA was rarely found in both social interactions and in education, and sometimes in the media. Findings also revealed that English was less used when compared to CA.However, a significant finding was that English was used more than SA, especially in social interactions and in education. Furthermore,this research work showed that CA was used more widely than had been thought. The common perception had been that CA is only a spoken variety of Arabic; however, the results showed that it was also commonly used in informal writing. In addition, investigation of the actual use of English revealed that its use was associated with the stature of the discourse.

The overall findings from both the direct and indirect methods investigating attitudes are perhaps in harmony in a broad sense. Nevertheless, to be more specific,some discrepancies were found based on the level of consciousness. Consciously, the participants, for example, believed that SA was superior to CA and English, never the less, the indirect investigation of attitudes showed that they perceived English to be superior. This might be related to the participants'cognitive awareness of the significance of SA, on the one hand, and the strong indirect influence of English, on the other. While the participants revealed clearly positive attitudes towards English in both the conscious and subconscious investigations, their attitudes towards the two varieties of Arabic were similar but less positive.